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MOHAWK NOTES.

MANY years ago the New York Regents published the Mohawk lexicon of Father Bruyas, compiled probably before the year 1700. The edition is not without typographical errors, and contains some obsolete French words, as might be expected. It is not a complete lexicon, dealing only with radical words and their derivatives, while the later student would be glad of many names of things animate and inanimate. He will be struck, however, with the frequent allusions to customs, some still existing, while some others have passed away. This paper will briefly mention a few of these.

The name of the confederacy differs slightly in the dialects, and has the significance of the whole, finished, or real cabin, which we commonly, but rather arbitrarily render as the Long House. In Mohawk this was Hotinnonsionni. The Onondagas usually term it Konosionè, but this comes from two words: Kanosa, a house or cabin, and Onwe, real. The Relation of 1654 gives it a little differently: "From all time these five Iroquois nations have called themselves in the name of their language, which is Huron, Hotinnonchiendi, that is to say, the finished cabin, as if they were only one family." In a note annexed to Montcalm's letter of April 24, 1757, there is another variation: "The Five Nations, or Confederates, or Iroquois, a species of league or association formed by five peoples, which, Iroquois by origin, comprised only one single house, which is called the Iroquois cabin, or the grand village." L. H. Morgan says, "The Iroquois called themselves the Ho-de-no-sau-nee, which signifies the people of the long house." He considered the long house peculiar to the Iroquois, which it was not, but gives the usual idea of five fires or families living under one roof. The complete house remained unchanged. It formed the real cabin. Any allies were but extraneous structures, such as we sometimes add to the first design.

In each nation thus allied there were from three to a dozen clans distinguished by totems; three of these clans only being common to all the nations. This lexicon tells us that among the Mohawks the Turtle family had nine voices, that is, so many votes in their own Mohawk council. For while the Grand Iroquois Council had at least fifty members, the national councils were much like our state legislatures. As there were distinctions of rich and poor, which varied, so there were distinctions of rank which changed but little. There was an aristocracy, out of which came the chiefs, and the members of this aristocracy were called Agoianders. The word Atenrienentons meant to call together the Agoianders of each Mo-

hawk town into one, to hold a council there. Women were of this rank, as well as men. Either was entitled Gaiander, most excellent. At the feasts some things were held in reserve, called Oskokwa, the portion of the Agoianders. When these gave wampum to each other, as befitted their rank, it was termed Garonkaratise. There was a dance, also, called Gannisterohon, which these held, and in which they gave porcelain or wampum to the spectators. It may be noted that the French used the word *porcelaine*, for either shell, porcelain, or glass beads.

Generally there were three villages of the Mohawks; sometimes more, but the land was more distinctly divided among the three clans than in the other nations. Here only do we meet with the appropriate name of the three lands of the Mohawks, though not the distinctive name of each. The familiar Gannata, or village, appears, which is the original of Canada. The initial letter is often modified in all the dialects. In Onondago the word is Kanata.

The use of iron was a great acquisition for the Mohawks, and thus they termed all Europeans Aseronni, makers of hatchets. Another gain was theirs. Before the Dutch came, very few were the shell beads of the Iroquois, and none had they of glass. Afterwards these became abundant, but were still highly prized. Thus it was that there was a name for him who was avaricious of glass beads. But the true council wampum, Ondegorha, was still more precious, redeeming slaves, atoning for bloodshed, and purchasing peace. Between equals it was necessary to make equal gifts of this. As they cast it upon a corpse, the Oneidas said, "Raondigonra rogarewat," regretting the one dead. One word alludes to the placing of the wampum belt on the forehead. Onniatsara was the porcelain which the women attached to the hair which fell down at the back of the head. Gannonton was to cast the wampum for those dead. Then the "canons de porcelaine," Enhrar, the long glass beads, are mentioned, which the missionaries gave the Indians for learning their lessons well.

Although Colden asserts that the Five Nations had no slaves, many are the allusions to them here and elsewhere, and even the bonds with which they were tied. The scaffold on which the prisoner was tortured has a full description in the Relations, but here the account is brief. Bark was gathered for it, and it was called Ennisera and Askwa, with other terms for its use. Often came the ceremony called Gannitenton, though most nations shared in this. It was the beating on the cabins on the evening when they had burned or killed a captive. Thus they hoped to drive his soul away and keep themselves from harm. The Canadian Algonquins did this with all the dead. One word has a curious origin. The Mohawks used

Gaskennonton to express the journey to the land of souls, and thence the deer was called Oskennonton, because it was so timid as always to think itself dead, flying through the forests like a ghost.

Iroquois dances have greatly changed. Two centuries ago Tawtonwesaon was the dance of the women, and this seems to have survived; at least the women still have dances of their own. Atrén was the Mohawk dance of the ancients, or old and principal men. This included singing. The dance of the Agoianders has been mentioned, where they gave wampum to the spectators. Allied to these were the many songs, but few of which are named in this lexicon. Gannonhouarori was to sing the death-song, or another, provided that one sings alone without any response. Most songs had responses. Atonront was a song to which one responds by the *hen! hen!* Atonriethon is to make the *he! he!* to the chant of the warriors. This ancient response is still used with fine effect. Gaonwajen was a kind of chant used when they made a feast of dogs. This was not the White Dog feast, which is of later date as regards this feature, and is a changed form of the Onnonhouarari, or Dream Feast. Dreams were of the first importance, and Garouston meant to invoke the Otkon, or demon, upon any dream which one had. It was a maxim that the dream was the rule of life. Another response, Niohen, was made by the ancients as a token of consent or approbation. This, essentially, is still retained.

Various significant cries were also in use. Kahrenreton was to make the cry for news, but this was not the cry itself. Atwendoutenyon was to make any cry about the village; the public cry being the usual way of announcing anything. There was a cry of victory, hardly differing from Tajesagaiont, where one makes the Kohe. This has always been a modulated cry, expressive of many things, and in one form, Koué, is thought to have been the last syllable of the word Iroquois. It is still used at feasts, and in the announcement of deaths; long drawn out in grief, and shortened in joy. The newsbearer utters this alone as he passes through a village to declare a chief's death.

The custom of smoking in councils was the origin of a word for sitting close together, as they did in councils. From the words Gatsista and Otsire, or fire, came words signifying to hold or close councils, by kindling or putting out the council fire. In this connection we have Ganniegarrannie, to rub two pieces of wood between the hands to make fire. Fire had other uses. Onterita was to burn the ground preparatory to sowing seed. Another word meant to give a signal by the smoke of a fire made on purpose; a common practice in the West, but not so easily done in forest lands. Pumpkins and corn were roasted in the fire. Sweating houses were

used for divination, nor were these always of bark, but often kilns of stones. Earthen kettles had not gone out of use. They were the Ontakonwe, the real or original kettle. The Gannatsiarouton was the war kettle where the warriors sang. Ata was a small piece of bark or wood, to serve as torches when they hunted pigeons in the night.

Hunting and fishing usages have but slight prominence in this lexicon. Pigeon roosts are a thing of the past, but the Kannhi was a great rod with which the Mohawks struck down the pigeon nests, and the night hunt of these had its own name. Atkatokwisaon was to fish with a basket, and Ganniero to take little fishes with the same ; perhaps by damming a stream around the basket, and driving the fish in, as I have seen done. The different nations did not always fish alike. Gagatotsienton is to draw up the fish, as the Mohawks did with the herring. Gaihonhenton is to fish in the Oneida fashion, chasing the fish. They placed stakes across a creek, so as to form a pound, into which the fish were driven. Spears, arrows, and clubs did the rest. Ganniat was to have nets. These were commonly used, being originally made of wild hemp, or Oskaro. Much of the cordage used was of the inner bark of trees, or sinews of animals. Slight allusions there are to domestic manufactures. Gan-nakti is a bobbin or spindle, at the end of which is fixed a little stick, which the children cause to run on the ice. Gasire is a covering by great hair, or Iroquois stuff ; perhaps merely fur. Mats have many figurative meanings.

The Iroquois used corn meal in the form of sagamité, and the ornamented stirring stick yet survives. The Asennonte was a little sack attached to the woman's girdle, in which she placed the corn to be planted, and the wooden hoe was still used. Generally the Iroquois used the wooden pestle and mortar as they now do. There was also a name for crushing the corn between two stones, Karistiagon ; indeed more than one. This was a survival of the most primitive mode. Garhatageha, or huckleberries, called bluets by the French, were a favorite food.

Touatgenhogen, was to have the hair divided on the forehead, and from this the women had one of their names. Onnigensa was the hair of the women falling behind, and usually braided. For personal adornment red hair was put around the head or neck. Gannonsen was to mark upon the body with the point of a needle, and tattooing was often practised. Black Prince, the Onondaga chief, thus intensified his dark complexion.

Atonriaron was to wet with medicinal water, which was spirted over a person or thing bewitched. The only other reference to magic rites is the Astawen, or the turtle-shell which the juggler

holds in his hands while singing, but mention is made of an animal having the face of a man. A term for playing with fruit stones as the women do, throwing them with the hand, seems different from the ordinary peach stone game; but another, much like it, means to play with the dish, as in that game. Gannonrare is more definite, referring to success in the game of all white or all black. But the Mohawks loved other sports. There were words to denote sliding on the ice, on a place marked out for this; and even for sliding on a bark or plank. Gahwengare was a dry stick used for a message, such sticks having been used before they had wampum. Another term denoted the carrying of the bride into her husband's cabin. Among the early Onondagas she only lodged there until children were born, spending the day with her parents. Garhon was the cradle, which still survives in a few instances. A long word tells how it might fall, but not in the words of the nursery song. Speaking of falls, the Iroquois word for a waterfall is Gaskonsage, from Gaskonsa, a tooth, as though the perpendicular white sheet reminded them of this. Few common nouns, however, appear.

It is quite probable that other early vocabularies may include similar items of interest, but of less value. Zeisberger's Onondaga dictionary is more properly Mohawk, and I find little in it to be noted now. Another of early date, published by the late J. G. Shea, and termed Onondaga by him, seems to include words from all the dialects, notably the Cayuga. It has a list of the months, as given by the Onondagas now, and in their present order but not their proper position. This is easily seen, because the primitive meanings of these words are now known.

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